



The Counsell of a Father to his Sonne, in ten seuerall Precepts.

Left as a Legacy at his death.



The Induction or Preface.



SONNE, The vertuous inclination of thy matchlesse Mother, by whose tender and godly care thy Infancy was governed, together with thy education vnder so godly and zealous a Tutor, puts me rather in assurance then hope, that thou art not ignorant of that summary bond, which is onely able to make thee happy, as well in thy life as death. I meane the true knowledge of thy Creator and redeemer, without which all things are vaine and miserable. So that thy youth being guided by so sufficient a teacher, I make no doubt but he will furnish thy life both with Diuine and mortall documents; yet that I may not cast of the care becoming a parent towards his child, or that thou shouldest haue cause, to deriue thy whole felicity and welfare rather from others, then from whom thou receivest thy birth and being, I thinke it fit and agreeable to the affection I beare, to giue thee such aduertisements and rules for the squaring of thy life. as are gayned rather by long experience, then much reading, to the end, that thou entring into this exorbitant age maist be the better prepared to shun those cautious courses, whereinto this world, and thy lacke of experience may easily draw thee. And because I will not confound thy memory, I haue reduced them into ten precepts, if thou imprint them in thy mind, thou shalt reape the benefite, and I the contentment. And these are they.

The first Precept.

FIRST, When it shall please God, to bring thee to mans estate, vse great providence and circumspection in the choice of thy wife: for from thence may spring all thy future good or ill. And it is an action like to a Stratagem in warre, where man can erre but once. If thy estate bee good, match neere home and at leisure: if weak, then farre off and quickly, enquire diligently of her disposition, and how her parents haue bene inclined in their youth. Let her not be poore, how generous soeuer: for a man can buy nothing in the market with gentility. Neither choose a base or vncome creature: for that will breed contempt in others, and loathing in thee. Make not choice of a dwarfe or a foole: for from the one thou maist beget a race of Wigmies, the other may be thy daily disgrace. For it will pteke thee to heare her talke, and thou shalt finde (to thy great grieve) that there is nothing so fullsome as is a thee foole.

Touching the government of thy house, let thy hospitality bee moderate, according to the measure of thine owne estate, rather plentifull then sparing, (but not too costly) For I neuer heard nor yet knew any man

grow poore by keeping an orderly Table, But some consume themselves with secret vices, and their hospitality must beare the blame. Banish drunkards out of thy house, which is a vice that impaires health, consumes much, and makes no shew, besides I neuer heard any commendations ascribed to a drunkard more then the well bearing of his drinke which is a commendation fitter for a brewers house or a day-man, then for either a Gentleman or Seruingman.

Beware that thou spend not aboue three of the foure parts of thy life, vncleues, nor aboue one third part thereof in thy house, for the other two parts will but decay thy extraordinaries, which will alwaies surmount thy ordinaries by much, for otherwise thou shalt liue like a rich beggar in a continuall want, and the needy man can neuer liue happily nor contented, for then euery least disaster makes him ready to mortgage or sell. And that Gentleman that then sells an acre of land, loseth an ounce of credit, for Gentility is nothing but ancient riches. so that if the foundations do linke, the buildings must needs consequently faile.

The second Precept.

Bring thy children vp in obedience and learning yet without austerity, praise them openly, reprobend them secretly, giue them good countenance, and conuenient maintenance according to thy ability, for otherwise thy life will seme their bondage, & then what portion thou shalt leaue them they may thanke death and not thee for it. Marry thy daughters betimes least they marry themselves. Suffer not thy sonnes to passe the Alpes, for they shall learne nothing but pride, blasphemy, and Atheisme. And if by chance they attaine to any broken languages, they will profite them no more, then to haue one meate serued in diuers dishes. Neither by my aduise shalt thou traine them vp to warres, for he that lets by his rest to liue by that profession, can hardly be an honest man, or a good Christian, for euery warre is of it selfe vniust, the good cause may make it iust, besides it is a science no longer in request then vse, for souldiers in peace, are like to chimnies in sommer,

The third Precept.

LIE not in the country without coyne and cattell about thee. for hee that must present his hand to his purse, for euery expence of house hold, may be likened to him that keepe water in a leake, And for thy prouision, lay for to buy it at the best hand, for there may bee a penny saued betweene buying at thy neede, or when the market, or the seasons do serue fittest for it.

Be not willingly attended or serued by kinsmen or friends, or men intreated to stay, for they will expect much, and do little, neither by such as are amorous, for their heads are commonly intoricated, keepe rather two too few, then one too many, feede them well and pay them with the most. So maist thou demand seruice at their hands, and boldly require it.

The fourth Precept.

Let thy kindred and allies be welcome to thy Table, grace them with thy countenance, and euer further them in all their honest actions, for by that meanes thou shalt double the bond of nature. so as thou shalt find them so many aduocates to plead an Apology for thee behind thy backe. But shake of those glowormes, I meane parasites and scrophants, who will feed and faune on thee in the sommer of thy prosperity, but in any aduersé fortune, they will shelter thee no more, then an Arbour in Winter.

The fifth Precept.

BE sure thou alwaies keepe some great man to thy friend, but trouble him not for trifles, complement him often, present him with many, yet small gifts and of little charge, And if thou hast cause to bestow any

great gratuity, then let it be some such, as may bee daily in sight, for otherwise thou shalt liue like a hop without a pole, liue in obscurity, and be made a footeball for euery insulting companion to spurne at.

The sixt Precept.

Vndertake no suite against a poore man without receiuing of great wrong, for therein making him thy competitor, besides that it is held a base conquest to triumph where there is small resistance, neither undertake lato against any man, before thou be fully resolved that thou hast the right on thy side, and then spare not for money nor paines, for a cause or two being well followed and obtained, may after free thee from suits a great part of thy life.

The seuenth Precept.

BEware of suertiship for thy best friend, for he y payeth an other mans debts, seeks his owne decay, but if thou canst not otherwise choole rather then to lend that money from thy selfe vpon good bonds, (though thou borrow it) So maist thou pleasure thy friend and happily secure thy selfe.

In borrowing of money bee euermore pretious of thy word, for he that cares to keepe day of payment, is Lord commander many times of another mans goods.

The eighth Precept.

TOWARDS thy superiours be humble yet generous, with thy equals familiar, yet respectiue, towards inferiours shew much humility and some familiarity, as to bowe thy body, stretch forth thy hand, vncouer thy head, and such like popular complements. The first prepares a way to advancement, the second makes thee knowne for a man well bred, the third gaines a good report, which once gained may easily be kept, for high humilities take such roote in the mindes of the multitude, as they are easilier worn by vnprofitable curtesies, then by charlith benefits, yet doe I aduise thee not to affect nor to neglect popularity.

The ninth Precept.

THUSK no man with thy credit or estate, for it is a more folly for a man to enthyall himselfe to his friend further then if iust cause be offered, he should not dare to become otherwise thy enemy.

The tenth Precept.

BE not scurilous in conuersation nor stoicall in thy iests, the one makes thee vntwelcome to all companies, the other puls on quarrels, and makes thee hated of thy best friend, Jestis when they doe saunour too much of truth, leaue a bitterness in y minds of those y are touched. And although I haue already pointed at these inclusiue, yet I thinke it necessary to leaue it thee as a caution, because I haue scene so many prone to quip and gyro, as they had rather lose their friend, then their iests. And if by chance their boylng baine yeld a quaint scoffe, they will trauell to be deliuered of it as a woman with child, those nimble apprehensions, are but the froth of wit.

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